

Soldiers establish Camp United

Story and photos by Spc. Eric M. McKeely

HURSO, Ethiopia—Soldiers from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, “The Old Guard,” Bravo Company, established and began operating out of a forward base in rural Ethiopia this week.

The base, named “Camp United” by company soldiers, will be used as a launching ground for local missions, predominately training with the Ethiopian military, said Sgt. 1st Class Fred L. Silhol, IV, platoon sergeant of Bravo’s 1st platoon.

The camp and the missions are part of the Bravo Company’s continued involvement in the Global War on Terrorism as part of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.

Camp United, located on a dusty swath of austere land encompassed by the Ethiopian Military Academy in Hurso, is a testament of determination and teamwork, Silhol said.

Before soldiers arrived the camp area was nothing but six slabs of concrete and piles of dirt, Silhol said.

“There has been a 180 degree turnaround,” Silhol said. “In 18 years in the Army, this was the sparsely place I’ve ever lived. It was a barren ground, and they turned it into a functioning forward base for the Old Guard.”

In addition to large living tents, the base now has a functioning operations center, medical center,

showers, toilets, exercise and weight room, field sanitation system and a morale and welfare tent.

“No one here is a skilled carpenter, but they all came together and figured out a way to build this base and to make it their home,” Silhol said.

A few days after establishing Camp United, company soldiers began training with the Ethiopian military. The training will include infantry fundamentals such as marksmanship, physical fitness and movement techniques.

Spc. Brandon A. Thorpe, a Bravo Co. soldier who helped establish Camp United, anticipated the training.

“I’ve looked forward to the training a lot,” Thorpe said. “It will leave a little part of me back here, and the training will continue to help their soldiers long after I’m gone.”

Thorpe said he now feels at home on Camp United and has a sense of accomplishment for the sweat and teamwork he contributed to it.

“I feel very proud of this place because I know we put this together with our hands. We made this happen,” Thorpe said.

Silhol said in addition to training with the

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Soldiers from the Old Guard, set up “Camp United” as a forward base for CJTF-HOA missions in Hurso, Ethiopia. The soldiers constructed tables for the camp. In addition to large living tents, the base now has a functioning operations center, medical center, showers, toilets, exercise and weight room, field sanitation system, and a morale and welfare tent.